

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**  
**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES**

Appellant:	Susie J. Wee	Examiner:	Xiomara L. Bautista
Serial No.:	10/682,542	Group Art Unit:	2179
Filed:	October 9, 2003	Docket No.:	200315123-1
Title:	COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION SYSTEM USING RICH MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS		

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**REPLY BRIEF TO EXAMINER'S ANSWER**

**Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

This Reply Brief is presented in response to the Examiner's Answer mailed March 19, 2009 (hereafter "Examiner's Answer"), and in support of the Notice of Appeal filed December 5, 2008 and the Appeal Brief filed February 5, 2009 (hereafter "Appeal Brief"), appealing the rejection of claims 1-45 of the above-identified application as set forth in the Final Office Action mailed September 5, 2008 (hereafter "Final Office Action").

At any time during the pendency of this application, please charge any fees required or credit any overpayment due to Deposit Account No. 08-2025 pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.25. Additionally, please charge any fees required to Deposit Account No. 08-2025 under 37 C.F.R. 1.16, 1.17, 1.19, 1.20 and 1.21.

Appellant respectfully requests reconsideration and reversal of the Examiner's rejection of pending claims 1-45.

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**ARGUMENT**

**I. Rejection of Claims 1-8, 14-29, 32-41, 44, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0172255 (Aoki) and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0201710 (Uchihashi).**

In reply to the Examiner's Answer, Appellant respectfully submits the following additional arguments which illustrate the specific recitations of claims 1-8, 14-29, 32-41, 44, and 45 that are not taught or suggested by Aoki and Uchihashi.

**A. Rejection of Claims 1-8 and 14-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Aoki and Uchihashi.**

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

first set of sensing and rendering components arranged to cover physical movements of multiple individuals present in a first environment;

second set of sensing and rendering components arranged to cover physical movements of multiple individuals present in a second environment;

interest thread detector that uses the first and second set of sensing and rendering components to detect multiple communication interactions each involving a respective subset of the individuals present in the first and second environments and that maintains an interest thread for each communication interaction;

communication provider that captures a set of media data from the sensing components and that combines the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of each subset of the individuals and that communicates the combined media data to the rendering components.

Neither Aoki nor Uchihashi, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the above features of claim 1.

Aoki does not teach or suggest a "first set of sensing and rendering components arranged to cover physical movements of multiple individuals present in a first environment" or a "second set of sensing and rendering components arranged to cover physical movements

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Docket No.: 200315123-1

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of multiple individuals present in a second environment” as recited in claim 1. The Examiner concedes, however, that “Aoki does not specifically teach detecting physical movement of the individuals.” Examiner’s Answer, p. 8. If, as conceded by the Examiner, Aoki does not teach or suggest these features of claim 1, then Aoki also does not teach or suggest a “communication provider ... that combines the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of each subset of the individuals” as recited in claim 1 because Aoki does not detect the physical movements of individuals.

The portions of Aoki cited by the Examiner further illustrate how Aoki does not teach or suggest the above features of claim 1. For example, the Examiner cites the following teaching of Aoki on p. 12 of the Examiner’s Answer.

[a]n ‘additional response analysis’ module 328 can be included that receives non-audio data such as video information, biometric information, eye-tracking information etc. The ‘additional response analysis’ module 328 can analyze this data to determine conversational characteristics that can be correlated with the audio information provided by the one or more analysis audio data paths 317 as well as information developed by other modules in the floor analysis module 303. Aoki, paragraph [0061] (emphasis added).

This teaching in no way suggests that the non-audio data represents physical movements of multiple individuals present in an environment. Rather, the non-audio data is used to determine conversational characteristics that have no relationship to the physical movements of individuals.

As another example, the Examiner cites paragraphs [0170] and [0178] of Aoki as a teaching or suggestion that “[t]he physical environment (such as the rooms within a home or an office building) can be augmented with sensors that track individual users as well as directional beam-forming arrays consisting of multiple microphones ... .” Examiner’s Answer, p. 14 (reciting the teaching of Aoki paragraph [0170] *verbatim*). This teaching of Aoki also refers to the presence of individuals in a physical environment as detected by the use of one or more microphones and not to the physical movements of multiple individuals present in an environment.

The remaining portions of Aoki cited by the Examiner on pp. 12-14 of the Examiner’s Answer also do not teach or suggest the above features of claim 1.

Uchihashi also does not teach or suggest a “communication provider ... that combines the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical

**Reply Brief to Examiner's Answer**

Appellant: Susie J. Wee

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---

movements of each subset of the individuals” as recited in claim 1. As noted in the Appeal Brief, Uchihashi teaches that “[t]he candidate event activity is then provided to the operator in an intuitive format facilitating the selection of the appropriate camera capable of capturing the second speaker.” Uchihashi, paragraph [0022]. Uchihashi does not teach or suggest that the candidate event activity is used to combine “captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of each subset of the individuals” as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Uchihashi also does not teach or suggest the above feature of claim 1.

Appellant respectfully submits that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited references because none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the above features of claim 1. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 and claims 2-8 and 14-21 which depend from claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reversed.

**B. Rejection of Claims 22-29 and 32-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Aoki and Uchihashi.**

Claim 22 recites, *inter alia*:

- providing a first set of sensing and rendering components for covering physical movements of multiple individuals present in a first environment;

- providing a second set of sensing and rendering components for covering physical movements of multiple individuals present in a second environment;

- detecting multiple communication interactions each a communication interaction involving a respective subset of the individuals present in the first and second environments;
- maintaining an interest thread for the each detected communication interaction;

- capturing a set of media data from the sensing components;
- combining the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of the respective subset of the individuals;
- communicating the combined media data to the rendering components.

Neither Aoki nor Uchihashi, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the above features of claim 22. In particular, neither Aoki nor Uchihashi teaches or suggests

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Docket No.: 200315123-1

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“combining the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of the respective subset of the individuals” as recited in claim 22 for the reasons provided above with reference to claim 1.

Appellant respectfully submits that claim 22 patentably distinguishes over the cited references because none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the above features of claim 22. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 22 and claims 23-29 and 32-33 which depend from claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reversed.

**C. Rejection of Claims 34-41, 44, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Aoki and Uchihashi.**

Claim 34 recites, *inter alia*:

- providing a first set of sensing and rendering components for covering physical movements of multiple individuals present in a first environment;

- providing a second set of sensing and rendering components for covering physical movements of multiple individuals present in a second environment;

- detecting multiple communication interactions each a communication interaction involving a respective subset of the individuals present in the first and second environments;
- maintaining an interest thread for the each detected communication interaction;

- capturing a set of media data from the sensing components;
- combining the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of the respective subset of the individuals;
- communicating the combined media data to the rendering components.

Neither Aoki nor Uchihashi, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the above features of claim 34. In particular, neither Aoki nor Uchihashi teaches or suggests “combining the captured media data in response to the respective activities indicated by physical movements of the respective subset of the individuals” as recited in claim 34 for the reasons provided above with reference to claim 1.

Appellant respectfully submits that claim 34 patentably distinguishes over the cited references because none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all

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Docket No.: 200315123-1

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of the above features of claim 34. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 34 and claims 35-41, 44, and 45 which depend from claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reversed.

**II. Rejection of Claims 9-13, 30, 31, 42, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Aoki and Uchihashi and U.S. Patent Publication No. 20020191071 A1 (Rui).**

Although the Examiner repeats the rejection of claims 9-13, 30, 31, 42, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Aoki and Uchihashi and Rui from the Final Office Action in the Examiner's Answer on page 11, the Examiner provides no additional arguments in support of the rejection. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests the reversal of the rejection of claims 9-13, 30, 31, 42, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for the reasons provided in the Appeal Brief.

**III. Objection to the specification under 37 CFR §1.75(d)(1) and MPEP §608.01(o).**

Although the Examiner repeats the objection to the specification from the Final Office Action in the Examiner's Answer on page 3, the Examiner provides no additional arguments in support of the objection. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests the reversal of the objection to the specification for the reasons provided in the Appeal Brief.

**IV. Objection to the drawings under 37 CFR §1.84(p)(5).**

Although the Examiner repeats the objection to the drawings from the Final Office Action in the Examiner's Answer on pages 3-4, the Examiner provides no additional arguments in support of the objection. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests the reversal of the objection to the drawings for the reasons provided in the Appeal Brief.

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Docket No.: 200315123-1

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**CONCLUSION**

For the above reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that claims 1-45 of the pending Application have not been established to be obvious in view of the cited references. In addition, Appellants respectfully request the reversal of the objections to the specification and drawings.

Accordingly, Appellants respectfully request that the Examiner be reversed. Any inquiry regarding this Reply Brief should be directed to either Denise L. Saffold at Telephone No. (650) 236-4868 or Christopher P. Kosh at Telephone No. (512) 241-2403. In addition, all correspondence should continue to be directed to the following address:

**Hewlett-Packard Company**  
Intellectual Property Administration  
P.O. Box 272400  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80527-2400

Respectfully submitted,

Susie J. Wee,

By,

DICKE, BILLIG & CZAJA, PLLC  
Fifth Street Towers, Suite 2250  
100 South Fifth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
Telephone: (612) 573-2000  
Facsimile: (612) 573-2005

Date: May 19, 2009

CPK:dmd

/Christopher P. Kosh/

Christopher P. Kosh

Reg. No. 42,760